

## A few winter road reminders

This winter season we have all been blessed, or cursed, with a high level of snow. It's only early January so we know winter will linger for a while longer. Town of Rumford Public Works Department have already plowed snow multiple times. The ditches and road sides are piled high and we are trying to push snow back further to make more room so the roads don't become too narrow. Yes, we expect more snow.

Road maintenance crews are doing a great job but we need help from town and River Valley residents.

Please do not plow snow from private driveways and parking lots out into the roads, road right-of-ways and ditches.

For one thing, it increases the Road Service Area budget when maintenance contractors have to struggle to remove even more snow pushed into the road right-of-ways and ditches. It fills up the ditches, slows down snow removal equipment and delays service to others needing snow removal. Bottom line, it costs the taxpayers more for the maintenance services provided and increases the time it takes to get the roads cleared.

Another issue is public safety. Higher snow piles make it more difficult to see other cars entering the road and results in additional hazards for snow plow equipment and other traffic. More importantly, the reduced visibility increases the potential for vehicle-pedestrian accidents.

Finally, it's against the law under Maine Statutes. Admittedly, it is very difficult to enforce but it is against the law. Enforcement actions also create a whole other set of issues, including frustration and expense for everyone involved. It is not the preferred way to address this issue but may become necessary without recognition of the issue and help from our residents.

Please inform and remind children of the danger of playing in snow piles and berms near roadways. Operators of heavy equipment used in snow removal may have difficulty seeing children. Please help keep children safe.

Please do not approach equipment to talk with the operators. It is dangerous and slows snow removal efforts. Call the Public Works Department (364-4481) if you have questions, requests, suggestions or complaints.

Act responsibly. Please do your part to keep snow from your driveways, parking lots and property on your own property. It will improve safety, decrease hours needed to remove snow fall from the roadways, help reduce hazards to drivers, equipment operators and pedestrians, and reduce additional expenses in the road maintenance budget.

Thanks for your help and drive safely.

